

April 18, 1990

Dr. Helen M. Blau
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Dear Helen:

I suppose that it's a sign of how much fad and fashion rule our lives, that when your March 29 letter arrived I had trouble remembering what the "mommy track" was all about. Since then, I've looked back over the materials I collected a year ago and also thanks to your sending it, over the article by Cole and Zuckerman.

I do think it's still worth pursuing. Perhaps even more so now that the level of discussion nationwide has calmed down. There are a lot of positive things we can say about the scientific community and scientific careers for women. Given the increasing number of women getting degrees in biology or the life sciences, as reported by Cole and Zuckerman, your notion that such an article could encourage young women also argues in favor of doing it.

The question is how to proceed. I am in the same boat as I was last year, I can't take on primary responsibility for a draft. One thing that you might do is write an outline and then see if various people, such as those you mentioned in your letter, would each be willing to write one section according to the outline. Then maybe, if you are willing, you could put it all together and make it sound coherent. It would probably be a good idea to pass it by Harriet Zuckerman for comment before we sent it off. I know Harriet and I'd be glad to approach her on our behalf if you wished me to.

I'm sending you a copy of my letter of April 24, 1989, because the second paragraph has some points that might be used in constructing an outline. Another thing I would add is that we might want to discuss Carl Djerassi's suggestion, published

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in a letter to Science last year, that extra money for household help or childcare might be made available to young female scientists. The men do negotiate for various perks when they are considering taking a job and in addition to the kind of fellowship support Djerassi suggests, household help and childcare could be a perk to be negotiated for by female scientists.

If more data are desirable, then maybe Harriet has a master's student who would be interested in getting this data on our behalf. I'm not sure at all as to what those data would be, but such things as percent of female membership in a variety of biological societies, the number of women who have been officers of the societies, the number of women in biology in the National Academy of Sciences as a function years, stuff of that kind. Similarly, we might want to know the percent of women who are Hughes Investigators, or the percent of women who hold Jane Coffin Child's Fellowships and such.

I guess what I'm saying is that if you would start with an outline of some sort, I'd be glad to try my hand at a section of it.

With best regards, and congratulations on the exciting new work that Bruce Paterson has been telling me about.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Maxine'.

Maxine F. Singer

MFS/sb
enclosures